

In memory of Professor Yasuaki Nakano (1938–2007)

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We in the pattern recognition and document analysis communities are deeply sorrowed by the death of Professor Yasuaki Nakano on Tuesday, July 10, 2007 in Fukuoka, Japan. Members of the academic and industrial research communities, colleagues, students, and his family regret his passing and will miss him, but Professor Nakano's technical contributions to the field, his teachings and his memories will continue to live with us and future generations of researchers.

Born in 1938 in Tokyo, Professor Nakano graduated from the University of Tokyo in 1961 and finished a graduate degree in Mathematical Engineering at the University of Tokyo in 1963. His thesis was the first attempt to recognize more than 2,000 characters. In the same year, he joined the Central Research Laboratory, Hitachi, Ltd. He received his doctoral degree in Mathematical Engineering from the University of Tokyo in 1975 for his work on printed Kanji Recognition. In 1989, Dr. Nakano became a Professor in the Faculty of Engineering, Shinshu University before moving to Kyushu Sangyo University in 2003. He was elected a Fellow of International Association for Pattern Recognition (2000)

and a Fellow of the Institute for Electronics, Information and Communication Engineers, Japan (2002).

Dr. Nakano's technical interests covered a wide area and he worked on various research projects, starting with speech synthesis and recognition and signal processing for submarine sonar in 1960s. He began document recognition research in the early 1970s. He was the first to develop a Kanji recognition prototype, which was presented at Hitachi Technology Exhibition in 1973. His distinguished work also included touching digit recognition (1982), table form understanding (1984), and document layout analysis using a Form Definition Language (1986). His technique for recognizing touching handwritten digits on the basis of multiple hypotheses was successfully applied through Hitachi's optical character recognition system in 1982. His work in document understanding and numerous publications have significantly influenced the research community and will continue to do so for years to come. Dr. Nakano's contributions to the community also include his dedication to IAPR. He contributed both research and service to ICDAR, IWFHR and DAS, authoring numerous papers, and acting as a general chair for the DAS workshop in 1998 in Nagano and as a program co-chair for ICDAR in 2003 and in 2007. Finally, he will be honored as honorary Chair of DAS 2008.

Professor Nakano, you will be missed.